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MEDIA RELEASE

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LEGISLATORS AGREE TO BOOST TSAA AND TELS AWARDS

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 19, 2007 — Post-secondary financial aid was an important topic in Tennessee's 2007 General Assembly and numerous bills were brought to the table. When the session recently adjourned legislators agreed to boost awards for the Tennessee Student Assistance Award program and the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship program.

"These increases demonstrate Tennessee's commitment to college affordability," said Robert Ruble, executive director of the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation, the state agency that administers the two aid programs and several others. "The state has provided additional support for both need-based and merit-based student aid programs."

Under the need-based TSAA program, \$13.8 million of new support will fund an additional 6,500 Tennesseans. TSAA awards are nonrepayable grants to needy undergraduate students enrolled at least half-time in eligible Tennessee postsecondary institutions in a program leading to a degree or certificate. Last year, TSAC awarded nearly \$43 million to about 20,000 students.

Under the lottery scholarship program, next year's awards will increase as follows:

- Basic HOPE award for students attending four-year institutions from \$3,800 to \$4,000
- Basic HOPE award for students attending two-year institutions from \$1,900 to \$2,000
- HOPE access grant award for students attending four-year institutions from \$2,650 to \$2,750
- HOPE access grant award for students attending two-year institutions from \$1,700 to \$1,750
- Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant for students seeking a diploma or certificate at a Tennessee technology center from \$1,500 to \$2,000

Now entering its fourth year, the lottery scholarship program awarded \$187.7 million to 60,000 students last year.

Students apply for TSAA and lottery scholarships by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, better known as the FAFSA, available at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Submitting the FAFSA also begins the application process for federal Pell grants and other student aid.

For more information about eligibility for student financial assistance programs, including TSAA and lottery scholarships, please visit www.CollegePaysTN.com.

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